



U.S. Department of Justice

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For Immediate Release:

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May 16, 2007

EVENT: Guilty Plea

Defendant: Scott Valla,

**FORMER "TOYS R US" EMPLOYEE PLEADS GUILTY TO RECEIPT
AND POSSESSION OF CHILD PORNOGRAPHY**

A 35-year-old Marine City man, who possessed over 450 images and over 90 movies of child pornography pleaded guilty in federal court today, United States Attorney Stephen J. Murphy announced. Joining in the announcement was Andrew G. Arena, Special Agent in Charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Detroit.

Scott Valla, a former employee of a Toys R Us pleaded guilty to one felony count of receipt of child pornography and one felony count of possession of child pornography before United States District Judge Marianne O. Battani. Valla admitted that he used America Online to receive and download over 450 child pornographic images and that he possessed VHS videotapes of child pornography. Valla retained all of the images and movies at his sports card shop, The Dugout, located in Marine City. Many of the children depicted in the images and movies are under 12 years-of-age.

United States Attorney Murphy stated, "Downloading and collecting child porn only fuels the already too active market for images depicting the sexual abuse and exploitation of

children all over the world. I will continue to make the vigorous prosecution of these crimes a top priority.”

Receipt of child pornography is punishable by a minimum mandatory sentence of 5 years' imprisonment and a maximum sentence of 20 years' imprisonment as well as a fine of up to \$250,000 dollars. Possession of child pornography is punishable by a maximum penalty of 10 years' imprisonment and a fine up to \$250,000. The plea agreement entered with the court and signed by Valla calls for a term of imprisonment of 121-151 months.

A sentencing date has been set for August 16, 2007, at 2:00 p.m.

This case is being brought as part of Project Safe Childhood. In February 2006, Attorney General Alberto R. Gonzales created Project Safe Childhood, a nationwide initiative designed to protect children from online exploitation and abuse. Led by the United States Attorneys Offices, Project Safe Childhood marshals federal, state and local resources to better locate, apprehend, and prosecute individuals who exploit children via the Internet, as well as identify and rescue victims. For more information about Project Safe Childhood, please visit www.projectsafechildhood.gov

The case is being prosecuted by Assistant United States Attorney Sarah Resnick Cohen.